CHAPTER 5

# AUTO CIRCULATION & PARKING

Parking use and automobile circulation have been topics of many discussions on street corners as well as at public workshops and focus group meetings. Citizens are concerned that pedestrian safety and comfort should not be compromised by high traffic volumes and speeds. Other concerns relate to the adequate supply, availability and convenience of public parking.

## Auto Circulation

Because of the diversity of activity in Downtown Walla Walla, automobile traffic has increased. Some residents and business owners believe that the increase of visitors to Downtown positively impacts the local economy, and others consider the traffic, especially high-speed "through traffic", detrimental to the desired character and ambience of Downtown. Traffic congestion does have the potential to impact pedestrian use; pedestrian safety and convenient automobile access to Downtown must be coordinated to ensure a pleasant and safe experience for both pedestrians and drivers.

In order to ensure that residents and visitors continue to frequent Downtown Walla Walla, automobile access should be efficient and convenient.

There are several important transportation issues facing Downtown Walla Walla:

- Lack of distinct gateways and directional signage creates confusion for the first time visitor;
- Streets providing primary access to Downtown are also used to convey traffic from one edge of the City to another - typically referred to as "through traffic";
- There is an insufficient amount of public parking available to the existing Downtown work force;
- Due to the existing widths of several Downtown streets, many residents feel that major intersections are unsafe for pedestrians;
- Several blocks located on the far eastern and western portions of Downtown lack consistent sidewalks and/or handicap ramps; and

*Streets providing primary access to Downtown are also used to convey traffic from one edge of the City to another - typically referred to as "through traffic."*

- Downtown Walla Walla lacks coordinated bicycle routes and many commercial areas do not provide safe and secure bicycle storage areas.

### *Main Street*

Main Street, between 3rd and Colville, is the active commercial core of Downtown. A recent Local Improvement District financed major pedestrian improvements in the Downtown core. The majority of historical commercial buildings flank this busy street. On-street diagonal parking, combined with significant pedestrian foot traffic, which tends to slow automobile traffic, ensures that traffic speeds along this segment of Main Street are minimized. To the east of Colville and West of 3rd Avenue, traffic speeds tend to increase due to the decrease in commercial density and subsequent lack of pedestrian activity.

Although streetscape improvements and parking configurations are often used to promote pedestrian safety, additional remedies for slowing high speed traffic and relieving congestion are available. One viable option is introducing a roundabout to the intersection of Main Street and Palouse. Roundabouts with an inner circle diameter of fifty (50) or less are used in low speed environments exhibiting average operating speeds of 35 mph or less. In retrofit situations where a roundabout is constructed within the framework of existing streets and intersections, this alternative is relatively inexpensive because it typically requires minimal additional pavement and right-of-way expansion/acquisition at the intersection. Roundabouts are perceived as pedestrian friendly with short crosswalk distances and low vehicular operating speeds on approaches and exits.

sition at the roundabout. This would allow the train to proceed through the truck apron without conflict. There is no problem with vehicles stacking in the circulating roadway. Vehicles currently stack in the existing signalized intersection when a train passes.

Strategically locating a roundabout on Main Street at Palouse would address some of the primary issues raised by local residents at the public workshops regarding safety concerns. In addition, the roundabout itself would have to be designed to be safely negotiated by persons with disabilities. This would mean designing to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance with features such as Detectable Warning Surfaces and Accessible Pedestrian Signals, but should also include items such as low walls to guide people with visual dis-

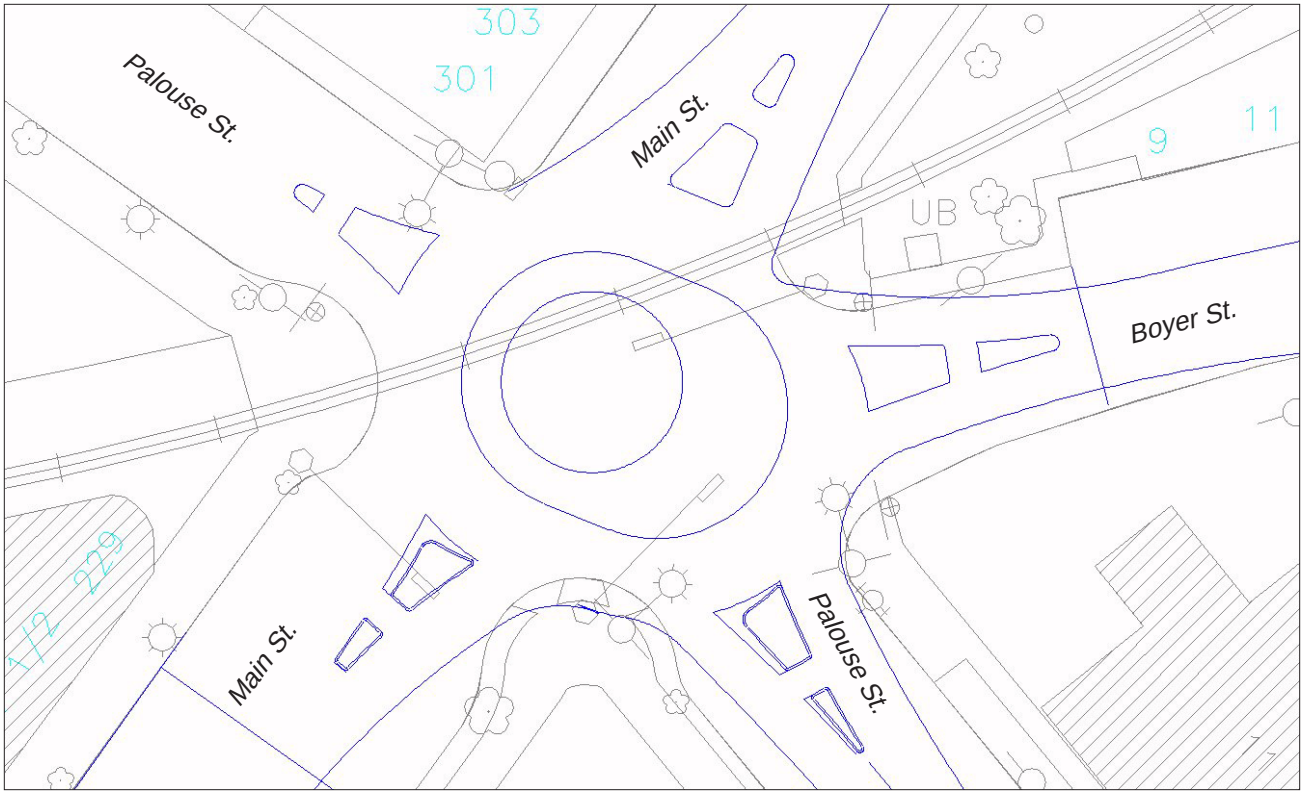



*Illustration of potential reconfiguration of Palouse/Main/Boyer Street intersection which depicts roundabout.*

This roundabout would have two points where a railroad crossing arm and signal would be placed. This would allow several right turn movements while the signal is activated. In addition, the rails would be set to grade with a concrete apron transabilities to crosswalks, and activated lighting strips to alert drivers that a pedestrian has entered that crosswalk. The combined visual and physical change in the road structure would prompt slower speeds and provide a signature intersection along Main Street.

# Insert Map #: Circulation Framework

# Back side of Circulation Framework

Recommended improvements for Main Street include:

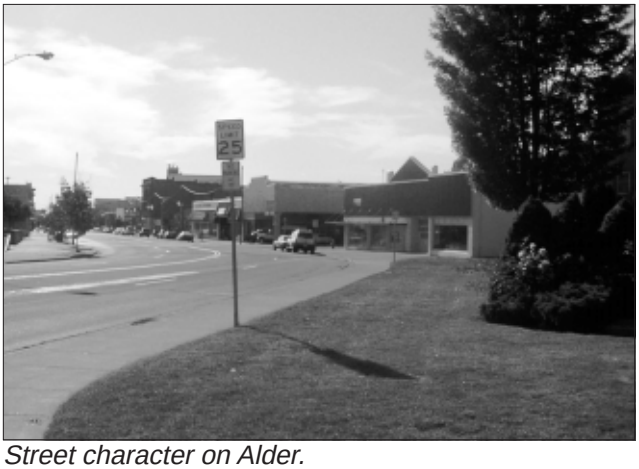
- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between 7th Avenue and Park Street;
- The construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Palouse and Main Street (at the 5-point intersection;
- Gateway identification at West Main/7th and East Main/Park.
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;
- Street trees installed and maintained; and
- Type II crosswalks constructed on Main between 7th and Park (except at those intersections where improvement have already occurred) to strengthen the existing street character and ensure pedestrian safety between activity centers.

## *Alder Street*

Alder Street currently serves as a conveyor of through traffic, connecting northeast Walla Walla and Whitman College to 9th Avenue. Speeds exhibited on this street are higher than those typically seen on Main Street. Pedestrian traffic is minimal and commercial development is scattered and fragmented.

Several important civic and public amenities are accessed from Alder: The Courthouse, the Library, and Carnegie Arts Center.

Although East Alder contains several established business, including restaurants, the density and




*Street character on Alder.*

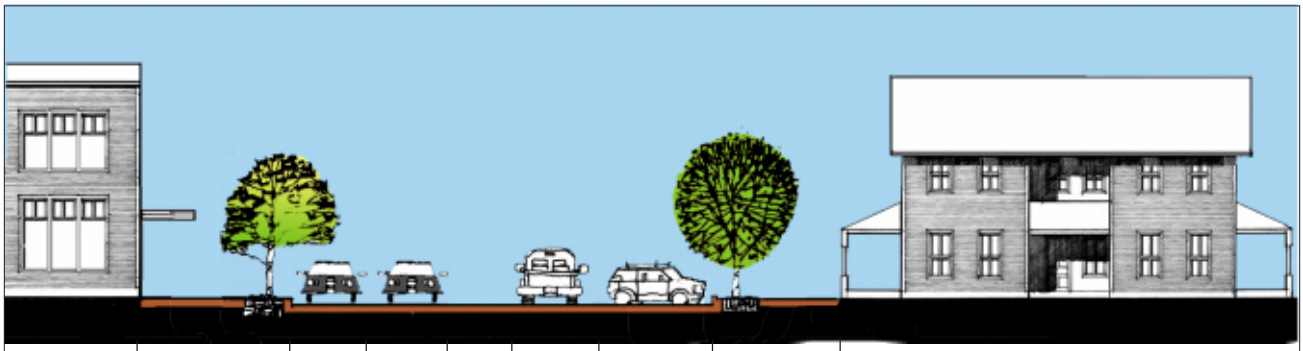
*Existing intersection condition at Palouse and Alder.*

configuration of existing development does not actively draw pedestrians from Main Street over to Alder.

The Land Use Strategy Map (found in Chapter 9) proposes increased densities of development on both sides of Alder, resulting in increased pedestrian activity and a demand for additional on-street parking. Mid-block pedestrian crossings at the Library and a Type I crosswalk constructed at the 5th Avenue/Alder intersection encourage pedestrian traffic between the medical center and Mill Creek. Additional on-street parking could readily be achieved by restriping Alder for two lanes of traffic and reconfiguring the existing parallel parking to diagonal parking.

Recommended improvements for Alder Street include:

- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between 7th Avenue and Palouse Street;
- Gateway identification at the Palouse/Alder intersection;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;
- Street trees installed and maintained;
- Type I crosswalks installed at the following intersections: Colville and 5th Avenues;
- Type II crosswalks installed at the following intersections: Main, 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st;
- A mid-block signalized pedestrian crossing linking Spokane and the Specialty Arts District with the library; and



| 20’ | 8’ | 12’ | 10’ | 12’ | 18’ | 20’ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| sidewalk | parallel parking | drive lane | turn lane | drive lane | diagonal parking | sidewalk |
| 100’ ROW | | | | | | |

*Alder Street Proposed Alternative #1*

- Restriping of lanes to accommodate additional on-street parking and to decrease vehicular traffic speeds.

Potential Alternative 1 depicts two travel lanes and a center turn lane. Parallel parking occurs on one side and diagonal parking occurs on the other side of the street. Assuming a 100’ right-of-way, the street cross-section would be as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TL** | Travel lane width | 12’ - 0” |
| **T** | Turn lane width | 10’ - 0” |
| **P** | Parallel parking width | 8’ - 0” |
| **D** | Diagonal parking | 18’ - 0” |
| **S** | Sidewalk width | 20’ - 0” |

Issues:

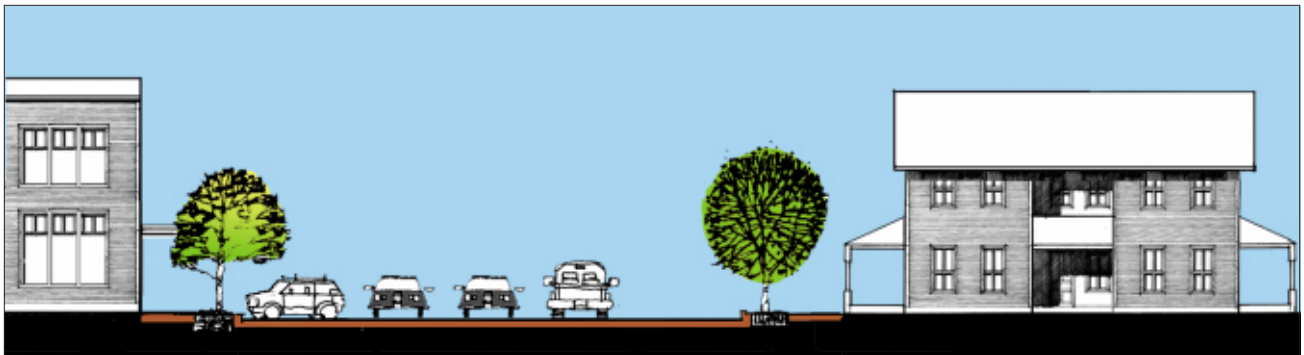
- There may be difficulty deciding which side of the street would be diagonal vs parallel parking.

Assets:

- The sidewalk width in this scenario allows for significant streetscape amenities.
- Diagonal parking is available on one side of the street, increasing the number of on-street parking spaces.
- There is adequate room to construct “bump-outs” at intersections to increase pedestrian visibility and safety.

Potential Alternative 2 depicts two travel lanes and two rows of diagonal parking. Assuming a 100’ right-of-way, the street cross-section would be as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TL** | Travel lane width | 12’ - 0” |
| **T** | Turn lane width | 10’ - 0” |
| **D** | Diagonal parking | 18’ - 0” |
| **S** | Sidewalk width | 15’ - 0” |



| 15’ | 18’ | 12’ | 10’ | 12’ | 18’ | 15’ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| sidewalk | diagonal parking | drive lane | turn lane | drive lane | diagonal parking | sidewalk |
| 100’ ROW | | | | | | |

*Alder Street Proposed Alternative #2*

Issues:
- Extreme increase in on-street parking may impact visibility of storefronts from street.

Assets:
- On-street parking opportunities are significantly increased.

## *Poplar Street*

Several established commercial businesses and St. Mary's Medical Center are located on Poplar Street. Although the majority of land abutting the Poplar Street right-of-way is zoned central commercial, this street acts as a transition and buffer zone to older residential neighborhoods along the south edge of Downtown. Residential uses are combined with businesses, services, office buildings and surface parking lots to create a diversity of uses not currently found elsewhere in Downtown.

The existing street section, combined with on-street parallel parking and sidewalks, creates a street environment that supports and encourages higher speed traffic. If land uses and parking configurations on Alder Street are altered to accommodate denser development and increased on-street parking, Poplar will need to absorb current "through" traffic now occurring on Alder. Streetscape enhancements and diagonal parking would impact current vehicular speeds on Alder and City residents, seeking a more efficient route through the City, would likely turn to Poplar as a conveyor of through traffic.

Recommended improvements for Poplar Street include:
- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between 7th Avenue and Palouse Street;
- Gateway identification at West Poplar/7th;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;
- Street trees installed and maintained;
- Type I crosswalks constructed at 5th/Poplar and Colville and Poplar to identify the intersection of Poplar with primary pedestrian corridors; and

*Existing street conditions.*

- Type II crosswalks installed at the intersection of Poplar and 2nd Avenue to denote the entrance to Downtown and to establish a safe and definitive pedestrian link between existing residential neighborhoods.

## *Rose Street*

Rose Street contains a variety of opportunity sites, each of which would increase the amount of pedestrian traffic along this street. Existing traffic along both east and west Rose Street is high volume and high speed with noticeable congestion occurring at the intersection of Rose and 2nd. Several large surface parking lots combine with the Ford dealership service center and the railroad crossing to convey an industrial character to this section of Downtown.

West Rose contains a number of blocks, which offer opportunities for future infill and redevelopment. Anchored at the west end by Seneca Industries**,** large portions of each block contain "stand-alone" commercial businesses and surface parking lots. Because of the redevelopment potential along both sides of this street, several specific improvements are recommended for the Rose Street right-of-way:

- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between 7th Avenue and Tukannon Street;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;

- Street trees installed and maintained;
- Type I crosswalks constructed at 5th/Rose, 3rd and Rose and Colville/Rose to identify primary pedestrian corridors and create strong pedestrian links between City services and public amenities;
- Type II crosswalks constructed at 2nd/Rose; and
- In addition and depending on the final configuration of the Farmer's Market Expansion, midblock pedestrian crossings between 3rd/4th and 2nd/Colville to encourage pedestrian traffic at the Farmer's Market expansion site and the proposed Urban Plaza.

## *North 2nd Avenue*

North 2nd Avenue links the City to Highway 12 and as a result, it is the primary gateway to Downtown Walla Walla. Recent growth and development in the tourism industry, combined with a strong local economy, has prompted redevelopment of several critical parcels along this busy corridor. A number of historic structures have been renovated, including the historic Marcus Whitman Hotel. Local wineries have targeted older buildings for refurbishment and the impact of redevelopment is readily apparent along this section of 2nd Avenue. A number of established businesses, hotels and restaurants are also accessed from 2nd Avenue.

Of primary significance to this corridor is the original Walla Walla Post Office, located at the intersection of Sumach and 2nd. This historic two-story structure also contributes to the historic character of this street.

There are a number of surface parking lots visible from 2nd Avenue, which results in a fragmented appearance of the overall gateway corridor. Many residents suggested that Downtown would directly benefit from gateway improvements located at North 2nd Avenue and Highway 12.

One potential enhancement is the construction of a formal median between the Highway 12 off-ramp and Sumach Street. The median would create a linear gateway element that would contain street trees, perennials, lighting and signage to denote a formal entry to Downtown. Because of the impact that both the Post Office and the Marcus Whitman Hotel have on this street and the contribution that their facades have on the character of Downtown, the median should terminate at Sumach Street to allow direct visual access from each side of the street to these historic buildings.

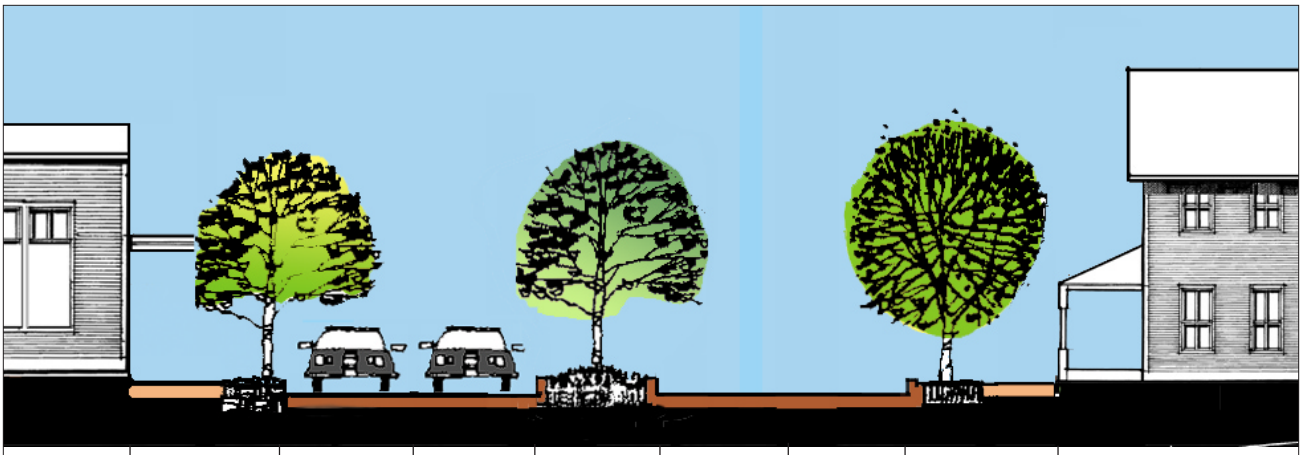
*Existing conditions on 2nd.*

Recommended improvements for North 2nd Avenue include:

- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between Highway 12 and Birch Street;
- Gateway identification at Hwy 12/2nd and Birch/2nd in addition to ornamental elements designed in conjunction with the proposed median;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;
- Construction of a planted median between Hwy 12 and Sumach Street;
- Street trees installed and maintained in conjunction with the sidewalk and also in the proposed median; and
- Type II crosswalks constructed at 2nd/Main.

**Second Avenue Street Design**

Vehicular speed and noise relate directly to the pedestrian experience and environment. There are a few street sections existing in the project area that could benefit from street and right-of-way modifications. The illustrative diagrams depict options that could be considered for street design in the Downtown. These options indicate parking, travel lanes, median and sidewalk widths. The assets and issues of each alternative and the proposed locations follow.



| 14’ | 8’ | 12’ | 12’ | 12’ | 8’ | 14’ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| sidewalk | parallel parking | drive lane | median | drive lane | parallel parking | sidewalk |
| 80’ ROW | | | | | | |

*Second Avenue Proposed Alternative*

**Key Variables:**

- Existing conditions (which ultimately dictate the potential number of lanes, sidewalk width and type of on-street parking that may be installed);
- Desired sidewalk width;
- Turning lane requirements;
- Median feasibility; and
- On-street parking demand and configurations: parallel versus diagonal parking. In some areas of Downtown, the preferred parking configuration is parallel parking, which allows for an increased sidewalk width, wider travel lanes (which can accommodate on-street bicycle traffic). Diagonal parking is targeted for areas where specific land use strategies will require increased public parking.

The North 2nd Avenue alternative illustrates two travel lanes and a center median. Parallel parking occurs on both sides of the street. Assuming an 80’ right-of-way, the street cross-section would be as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TL** | Travel lane width | 12’ - 0” |
| **M** | Planted median | 12’ - 0” |
| **P** | Parallel parking width | 8’ - 0” |
| **S** | Sidewalk width | 14’ - 0” |

Potential Location: Between Highway 12 and Sumach Street. The median terminates at Sumach at allow for direct access between two historic buildings; the Post Office and the Marcus Whitman Hotel.

**Issues:**

- Median eliminates potential turning lanes and designated on-street bicycle lanes.

**Assets:**

- A generous sidewalk width is available to provide ample room for streetscape improvements including trees, benches and pedestrian lighting. This could also allow for outdoor dining in some locations, as well as public art.
- A planted median provides a strong visual entry feature and unifies the streetscape between Highway 12 and Sumach Street.

## *5th Avenue*

Located at the west end of Downtown, the 5th Avenue Pedestrian Corridor has been targeted as the primary pedestrian link between St. Mary’s Medical Center, the Courthouse and Mill Creek. Because St. Mary’s Medical Center is a vital employment center for Downtown, proposed residential redevelopment combined with retail and office infill would increase development densities in this underutilized section of Downtown. Mill Creek improvements and pedestrian amenities would create a desirable destination for employees during lunch and/or after work. In addition, street improvements would also establish a safe pedestrian con-

nection between existing residential neighborhoods located northwest of Downtown. Recommended improvements for 5th Avenue include:

- Sidewalk and handicap ramp installation, where necessary, to ensure pedestrian safety between Sumach Street and St. Mary's Medical Center;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors to activity centers, civic amenities and civic services;
- Street trees installed and maintained; and
- Type I crosswalks constructed at 5th/Rose, 5th/Main, 5th/Alder and 5th/Poplar to identify the intersections along this primary pedestrian corridor.

*Surface lots are scattered throughout the City and serve specific buildings and/or adjacent public facilities.*

# Parking

In addition to the issues related to traffic volumes and speeds, additional public parking is needed. Obviously parking is a vital business function that must be preserved for existing businesses a well as enhanced to support additional business activity as Downtown continues to grow. The vision set forth in the Master Plan is to improve parking and business access over time. Variables to consider are the current number of spaces available, the convenience of their location, the ability of prospective users to locate available spaces and the policies and enforcement used to manage turnover. While there are a number of existing public parking lots, background data (see Appendix B) suggests that they are not conveniently located within traditionally acceptable walking distances, 1200-1350 feet, or 5 minutes.

In addition, on-street parking also serves both local employees and visitors. Both diagonal and parallel parking configurations have been used, depending on location and the width of the public right-of-way.

## *Public Parking Facilities*

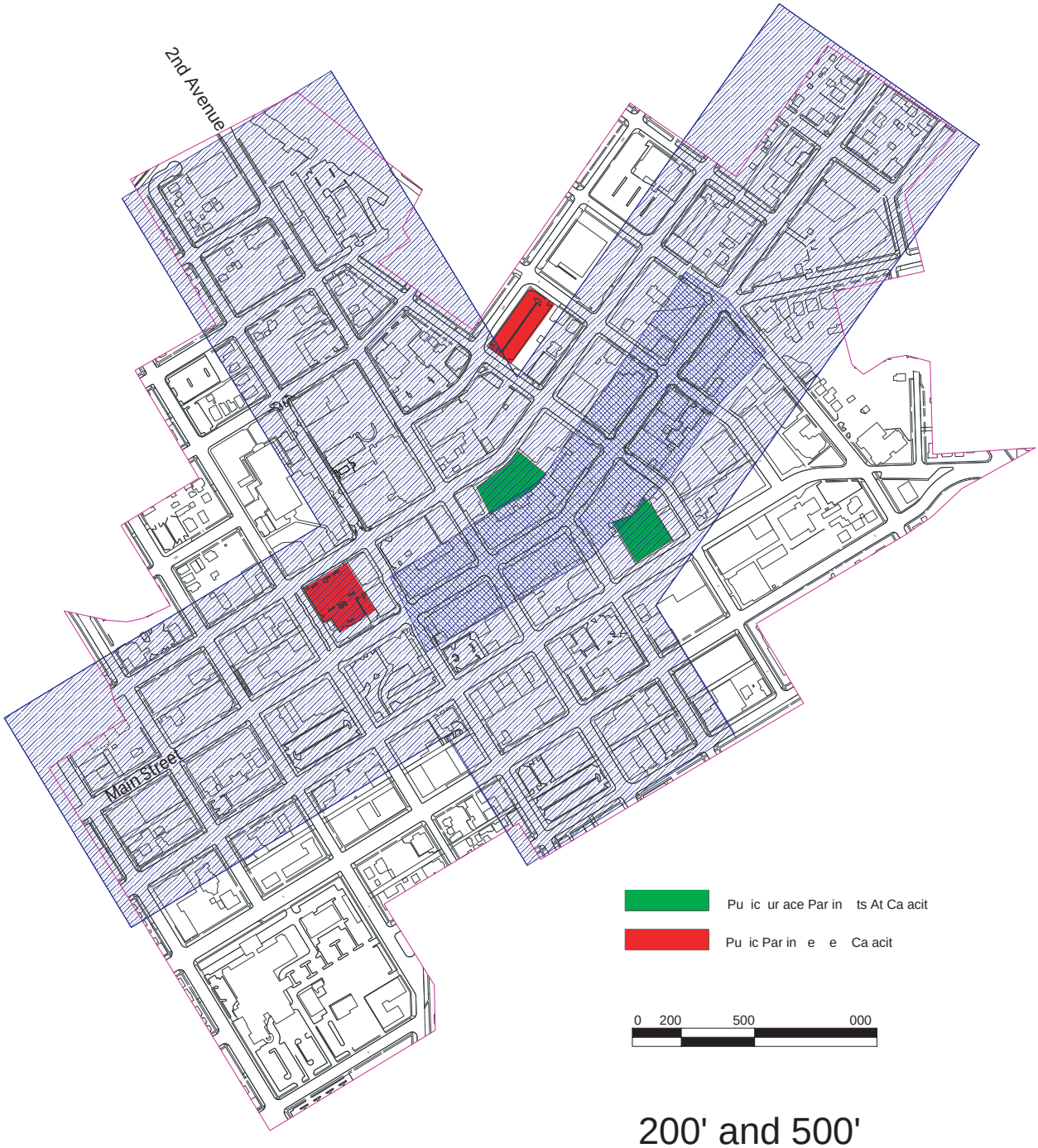
In general, there are three basic types of public parking facilities that may be considered in Downtown Walla Walla: off- street surface lots, on-street parking spaces and parking structures. Each type of facility has features that are appropriate for different applications, depending on the existing and/or proposed land uses and development densities.

**Types of Parking Facilities**

*Surface lots* are paved parking facilities that vary in size. Downtown Walla Walla offers several large public parking facilities that occupy the majority of a City block. Smaller lots are scattered throughout the downtown and serve specific buildings and/or adjacent public facilities. Typically, surface lots are constructed as a cost-effective interim measure in areas where such a use is not disruptive to adjacent land owners and where property values and development pressures are low.

*On-Street Parking* is currently accommodated by a combination of parallel and diagonal parking. On-street parking is desirable in those areas seeking to improve and/or expand pedestrian activity. In addition, on-street parking also acts as a traffic control device because it requires vehicular traffic to slow down to allow for access into and from parking spaces.

*On-street parking serves both local employees and visitors.*




200' and 500'
Pedestrian Catchment

*Parking structures* generally have two to four levels of parking with at least one ingress and egress point. Also, many communities are now requiring parking structures, which are otherwise an unattractive addition to the streetscape, to be "wrapped" with retail and/or office space.

Upon review of proposed development densities for the opportunity sites and other infill and development opportunities, the consultant team has projected a need for 143 additional parking spaces in the project area. This is over and above having some of the existing blocks convert from parallel to diagonal parking configurations and includes potential displacement of existing parking spaces by the proposed parking structure. There are also underutilized parking lots within the second tier (500') from Main and 2nd (refer to Appendix B).

It is important to avoid "over parking" the Downtown. General parking standards are typically based on suburban models such as office parks, shopping malls, commercial strip centers and large multifamily residential developments, which are inappropriate for Downtown. There have been several studies of parking in traditional "main street' environments that have concluded that parking spaces needed for commercial and retail mixed-use conditions require, generally on the upper end, no more that 2.2 spaces per 1000 square feet. This has been taken as low as 0.7 spaces/1000 sq. ft. (Portland), but that is in an area that is served by one of the more robust transit services in the nation. The evaluation done earlier in this section relies on the higher value of 2.2 spaces/1000 sq. ft.

To accommodate the 143 parking spaces, a vertical arrangement is required. A parking structure should be located close to 2nd and Main. An ideal site exists behind Bon Marche between Main and Alder, Colville and 1st. The existing alley system can provide vehicular access to the structure. A second story pedestrian access from the structure to Bon Macy's could also be integrated into the design of the structure. Approximately 72 spaces per floor can be accommodated and would require a two story building to fulfill the projected parking need. Another potential location for a parking structure is on the southeast corner of the Rose Street and 3rd Street intersection, directly across from City Hall. This location would require working closely with the current property owners to identify additional parking opportunities at this site in conjunction with current parking needs and structural repairs to the adjacent section of Mill Creek.

The cost for such a structure is approximately $18,750 per space in capital costs (including land acquisition). Adding about $300 per space per year in operating costs, the daily costs per space are $6.90 each. A 1% profit at 90% use would require that each space be leased for about $230 per month. See Appendix B for the cost analysis.

Because a two story structure would be at capacity upon completion, the City should explore the feasibility of additional floors and/or rooftop parking. Rooftop parking would increase capacity by 50%. The associated per space cost for rooftop parking is less than the per-space costs calculated above. If a parking structure is desirable, the structure should serve both current and projected parking needs and should be three stories, minimum. Future feasibility studies prepared in conjunction with parking garages should address the possibility and costs associated with a four-story structure.

It should also be mentioned that the City has the opportunity to reduce user costs by subsidizing a portion of the capital expense and/or operating costs. Appendix D contains a synopsis of funding mechanisms based on State Statutes.

## *Parking Issues and Opportunities*

How future new parking facilities are developed is an important element of the *Downtown Master Plan*. There are a number of considerations that should be factored into parking planning and development.

- **Think of parking as a utility** (i.e., it provides a service that customers use) and not as a land use. Viewing parking from this perspective makes one ask the question of "where should parking be located to best serve demand?"

*An issue with parking development for the medical center is that it erodes residential neighborhood character. Cooperative parking solutions that share with commercial blocks should be considered.*

- **Take a systems approach** to viewing parking decisions. This requires that all parking structures, lots and on-street spaces be evaluated holistically: how is the current demand being accommodated? A systematic approach will evaluate how well the facilities are functioning, and if the public seeks out alternative parking facilities when individual sites are full. In addition, privately owned surface lots should also be evaluated to explore potential for shared parking. Security and lighting must also be addressed. Surface parking facilities in dark and/or foreboding places will not be readily utilized by employees who must return to their vehicles after dark during the winter months.

- **Combine other uses with new public facilities** whenever possible. Multiple-use parking facilities that include parking are desirable because they typically are more attractive than just a single-use parking facility. They are desirable from the public's point of view because the public can often park closer to their destination. They are also desirable for the developer, because a combined-use property can generate higher rental income than a stand-alone parking structure. In addition, the top story of a parking garage, if uncovered, can also serve as a location for civic functions. This outdoor space typically offers great views of the Downtown and of the City, depending on the topography.

- **Locate new public parking facilities** where they will serve the broadest range of users.

- **Ensure that new public facilities have enough spaces** to meet the expected demand created by nearby retail and commercial businesses and also assist in fulfilling increased needs during special events.

- **Ensure that public redevelopment projects have sufficient parking** to meet their needs as well as additional opportunities for public parking. When public projects would displace parking, such as in the case of the concepts set forth in Opportunity Site C, an equal or greater supply of workable parking must be made available.

- **Manage parking resources** to ensure parking turnover and to capture revenue.

## *Recommended Actions*

As the 2004 Master Plan is implemented, the need to address future parking needs will arise. When it does become clear that additional off-street parking is needed in Downtown Walla Walla, the following concepts should be considered.

**1. Develop parking structures and surface lots to service all areas of Downtown.**

Parking near the Downtown core would benefit a diversity of user groups including locals seeking government services, patrons of retail and dining opportunities, Downtown employees, cultural and civic events and tourists. City planners should resist the temptation to add surface lots in Down-

*Surface parking lots should incorporate substantial amounts of landscaping.*

town, due to the impact of such facilities on the streetscape.

**2. Coordinate a wayfinding and sign system that directs visitors and locals to parking lots.**
Clearly identify routes to parking that minimize potential conflicts with primary pedestrian routes.

**3. Require specific site design elements to screen and buffer parked cars and automobile lights from pedestrian corridors.**
See *City of Walla Walla Downtown Design Standards.*

**4. Confirm the distribution and quantity of projected parking needs.**
Additional parking will be needed Downtown as development densities increase. While this plan identifies two possible locations for new parking structures, the estimates of required new parking need to be refined as individual development and redevelopment plans are submitted. In addition, the City should make a concerted effort to reduce or mitigate impacts on individual businesses that may result from a loss of parking spaces due to implementation of a private development project or any of the public development concepts contained in the *Downtown Plan*.

This Master Plan recommends that a baseline parking study be undertaken. At a minimum this study should quantify the existing deficit if any, identify the ideal distribution of spaces around the Downtown area based on current and future needs, and provide additional detail on feasible locations for structured parking. In addition, this study should provide the parking management plan discussed in Recommended Action No. 5 below.

**5. Develop a Parking Management System.**
Parking should be viewed and managed as a "utility" that is provided by the City and County, and supplemented by private entities that directly benefit from the system. It should be regularly inventoried, managed and monitored.

A key part of this parking management strategy is enforcement. For the time being, while increased parking capacity is being discussed, the City should continue to actively enforce Downtown parking restrictions. A key concern is that many Downtown employees and business owners tend to park in valuable customer parking spaces. This should not be allowed to continue. If Walla Walla is to be a destination, then it must appear friendly to visitors. Access to parking, unfortunately, is the first service that businesses have to offer.

*Impacts of parking in residential neighborhoods*

**6. Automobile Speed Reduction.**
Vehicular Speed Reduction is essential not only because accident severity and frequency are reduced, but because it is perceptually more comfortable for the non-motorist. In addition, people in vehicles have a longer time to glance at the adjacent activity and shopping opportunities. This helps increase retail sales. Several sample speed profiles were run in the study area. Figure 2 in Appendix B shows sample average speeds measured along four corridor locations in December, 2003. Supporting research and background data is located in Appendix B.

# Transit Opportunities

Public Transit can easily help with full utilization of existing parking facilities. It is recommended that the trolley system be modified to accommodate tier 1 and tier 2 access (refer to Appendix B). Currently the trolley runs on 30 minute headways (time between trolley arrival at any given location) that extend both east and west of the project area. These headways are too long for comfortable and


# 5 Minute Walking Distance

frequent travel. It is suggested that the regular bus service extend along the existing trolley route and the trolleys circulate on 10 minute headways in a loop described as follows;

Begin at the transit transfer station on 4th and Main and proceed easterly along Main to Park Street. Then southerly on Park to Alder. Then along Alder to 5th Avenue. Turn right on 5th to Main. Finally, Main to 4th Avenue. This would have a very frequent service within the most commercially viable area of town and connect to important locations at Whitman College. The existing hotels in the City could recommend parking lot locations close to the route so that visitors are not troubled by having to search for parking in an area that they are not familiar with. This route would also connect to City Hall, the Courthouse and many other business and residential properties in the west portion of the project area. The capture rate should be significant and existing parking lots would then be very close to the route and encourage their use.

## Reducing Parking Demand

Shared parking is a common way of handling parking for a diversity of uses. For example, those attending civic celebrations and festivals would not necessarily park during the day when employees require parking. Because the program for development over the next five to 10 years will change, it is recommended that the City coordinate with the private sector to establish site-specific goals for new development and then analyze the proposed land uses for shared parking opportunities. The Urban Land Institute, among others, publishes standards for this strategy.

Actions:

- Travel reduction and “cash out” parking strategies are specific tools used to address employee parking demands and require employee incentives. For example, square footage of proposed development could be increased by reducing the number of required parking spaces. Each space has a value for each space. The employer must provide transit passes or cash incentives for ride-sharing. Depending on land value and other factors, this option could be beneficial to the City, Downtown and perspective employees.

- Street metered parking is not often a politically comfortable approach, but it yields significant results. Discussion with private and public interests on this issue has occurred with generally negative results. This strategy may warrant consideration in the future, however, if the parking structure is not built and there is a need to control on-street parking as a mitigating measure.


*Existing street layout.*

*Surface parking should be buffered from the sidewalk.*

- Dedicated employee parking is a method of limiting the use of retail parking space. It is successful when incentives are used by both the City and the private sector. All of the existing lots that are not adjacent to Main and Alder are also utilized at or above their 85th percentile capacity. An agreement by the City to dedicate certain space in public lots for the sole use of employee parking can free up some valuable on-street parking opportunities. Coupled with the trolley headways of 10 minutes and the addition of a parking structure, this could be an effective strategy.

- Informational brochures produced by the City and distributed to all commercial and retail establishments would also increase parking efficiency. The brochure should include a map of public parking lots, trolley schedules and routes.

- Signage is necessary to direct traffic to public parking. Especially to underutilized lots and for a new parking structure. Signs in the parking lots showing its location on a map along with trolley routes would also be helpful.